

WATKINS FOUNDATION
4000 Emanuel Cleaver II, Kansas City, Missouri 64130

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

This afternoon, 21 April 2008 at 4 pm, at Miller Rixey cemetery at KCI Airport, Oralea Watkins will give a brief statement explaining the basis and reasoning for her lawsuit against Mark Van Loh of the Kansas City, Missouri Aviation Department.

Following the statement, there will be a brief opportunity for questions.

For information about this release: contact Warren Watkins, 816 392 5021

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Speaking points for Oralea:

1. Why fence the Cemeteries Mr. Van Loh, and why now?
2. Why has the public airport planning process known for ten years or more of the historic assets of Platte County....and ignored and buried their existence? Have in fact graves already been destroyed, and the Aviation Department and its consultants and contractors just paved over that fact?
3. Why does Kansas City, Missouri City Government, both elected officials and paid staff ignore the opportunity for discussions about the historic Platte County assets?
4. Is this a pattern of abuse of Platte County residents and assets? And if so, why is it tolerated?
5. Are the public participation meetings staged by the Aviation Department accessible, and truly evoking public involvement? Are there better ways of obtaining public involvement? Why are these ways not listened to?
6. Why did the Aviation Department not come to the descendants of these grave yards and start planning a long time ago?
7. Why has the Aviation department gone to the media to present its case, and not engaged the people in those discussions?

8. Why do the print media limit their coverage and reporting to only those issues that are represented by City government? Has this instilled the confidence of the public that it has a free press working to represent all its issues?

9. Who is in Jefferson City lobbying for abatement of future taxes on these lands? Does that make it harder for privately owned lands to be developed in Platte County and across the state line, meaning reduced taxes from these airport investments AND reduced opportunity for taxes from private land development? And this makes sense how and why? And to whom?

10. We will gather on this spot Saturday morning to begin the proper process for development of Platte County lands supporting the very important regional airport facility.

PRESENTATION FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH, 2008

Good morning fellow Descendants, our families, friends, and respectful others;

We gather together, called by our collective ancestry.

In their times, they lived dependent on one another, each for the other's livelihood, safety, sanctity. In their times, their arrangement was bound by an ancient and barbaric economic and social institution, that of slave and master. In such an economy, both had little ability to chose freedom, without risking potential catastrophe.

The change came hard, only by the force of the War of all Wars.

This great society in which today's freedoms are taken for granted was paid for then by broken spirit individual, family, neighborhood, county, region, state, and national. The divided house had fallen. Bloodshed, torture, misogyny, depression, division, and death itself to this day relentlessly persist.

What has limited the pain and begun mitigating the suffering is our separate start on a path toward healing. This great, deep movement that is America's contribution to humanity is the realization of human spirit's drive for freedom of spirit, soul, and self. Though grudging, we have come together through our courts, legislatures, employment, and schools, and though democratic process found ways to heal.

We stand today, together, at these graves to tell you, our ancestors, we acknowledge your sacrifices, both of the servants and the served, those who sought freedom and those who wanted to grant it but could not;

We stand today, together, to tell and show you of the progress that has been made, by collaboration in law making and law abiding, in electoral process and in education making, in job seeking and wealth creation, in community building and in mutual defense of the way of life you made possible.

We stand together, today, to tell you these changes and progress and fulfillment of democracy's promise came about because our shared belief in the sanctity of life, and in our fundamental love for each other and ourselves. We each may hear different pastors, but in Community, we act together. We each may celebrate a universal power at different times, and in slightly differing traditions, but in Community, we are

one.

We stand together, today, to ask the forgiveness of you, our ancestors, that you we did not act sooner to celebrate the lives you led, or to thank you for the lives we now lead because of how you responded, in your ways, to what your times dictated.

We stand together, today, to pledge to you that we stand today as partners; we the living amongst ourselves and we the living to you the forgotten; we stand today as equally endowed people; we stand today as individuals forming one community, taking differing paths, living by the same precepts. We will on this day of April 26th, 2008, at 11:00 am or shortly thereafter, re-read the Proclamation uttered by President Lincoln on 22 September, 1862, aloud, together, as a first step toward our pledge that we agree to work together as citizens, in the courts of this State and this nation if need be, to affirm the fullest promise in every way of that lawfully stated and affirmed pledge to you, and to all citizens of the United States, that to be an American is to be free as a human being, with full protections and assurances, collectively defended.

While it has been a long time that anyone has been to visit you, we pledge the time will be short when we can fulfill our pledge uttered this day that you shall be respected, honored, remembered, and celebrated, not as black and white, but as our forefathers, Americans who made fulfillment of America's dream possible.

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